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Authority 963000
By [initials] Date 7/1/02



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TELEGRAM

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-20 SA-03 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-06 H-02

INR-06 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 IO-12 AID-20 PC-04 RSR-01 /134 W
014031

R 090540Z MAR 72
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7082
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS

TEHRAN 1381

SUBJECT: TRIALS/EXECUTIONS OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT ELEMENTS: STUDENTS
DEMONSTRATE AND SHAH LASHES OUT AT FOREIGN CRITICS

1. IN PROTEST AGAINST RECENT TRIALS/PUNISHMENT (PARTICULARLY
EXECUTIONS, WHICH NOW TOTAL 10) OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT ELEMENTS, TEHRAN
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS -- LEAD BY FACULTY OF ENGINEERING STUDENTS--
MOUNTED ON-CAMPUS DEMONSTRATION AFTERNOON OF MARCH 7 AND EVEN
LARGE ONE (CIRC 600) MORNING OF MARCH 8. WHILE UNIVERSITY
ADMINISTRATION FELT CAPABLE OF HANDLING MARCH 7 DEMONSTRATION
WITHOUT HELP OF OUTSIDE POLICE, THEY APPARENTLY FELT UNABLE DO SO
MARCH 8 AND CALLED NATIONAL POLICE ONTO CAMPUS FOR BRIEF PERIOD.
RESULT WAS MUCH MANHANDLING OF STUDENTS BUT THERE ARE NO REPORTS
OF ANY SERIOUS CASUALTIES/CLASHES, AND UNIVERSITY WAS QUIET BY
EARLY AFTERNOON.

2. SOME FACULTIES AT OTHER TEHRAN UNIVERSITIES (E.G. ARYAMEHR,
NATIONAL AND POLYTECHNIC) ARE REPORTED TO HAVE ENGAGED IN "SYMPATHY
STRIKES" MARCH 8 BUT SO FAR NO DEMONSTRATIONS REPORTED. THERE IS
RELIABLE REPORT THAT DEMONSTRATIONS BY STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF

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MESHED (SIX OF 10 EXECUTED CAME FROM MESHED AREA) BECAME SERIOUS ENOUGH THAT UNIVERSITY WAS CLOSED THREE DAYS AGO AND STILL REMAINS CLOSED. (COMMENT: WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF GOI ORDERS TEHRAN UNIVERSITIES CLOSED UNTIL AFTER NO RUZ HOLIDAY.)

3. FROM COMMENTS OF STUDENTS AND OBSERVERS CLOSE TO ACADEMIC CIRCLES, IT SEEMS CLEAR LARGE PART OF MOTIVATION FOR DEMONSTRATIONS AND SYMPATHY STRIKES IS STUDENT ANGER OVER GOI'S CONTINUED DETENTION OF SEVERAL STUDENTS AS "ANTI-STATE" SUBVERSIVES AND, EVEN MORE, ANGER OVER RECENT TRIALS AND EXECUTIONS OF THOSE CONVICTED OF ANTI-STATE ACTIVITIES. THERE ARE ALREADY INDICATIONS, HOWEVER, THAT GOI CONSIDERS TIMING OF DEMONSTRATIONS (PERHAPS DEMONSTRATIONS THEMSELVES)

PROMOTED BY ANTI-STATE ELEMENTS TO EMBARRASS GOI DURING VISIT OF CHANCELLOR BRANDT AND HIS CONSIDERABLE PRESS RETINUE.

4. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT, WHICH MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN INTENDED FOR EARS OF STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS AND THEIR SYMPATHIZERS, SHAH LASHED OUT STRONGLY IN MARCH 7 PRESS CONFERENCE (WITH GERMAN PRESSMEN) AT WHAT HE LABELLED DISTORTED FOREIGN REPORTING ABOUT TRIALS AND EXECUTIONS. HIM HIT AT LE MONDE VIGOROUSLY AND REPEATEDLY, AND TOOK PARTICULAR EXCEPTION TO LE MONDE'S APPEAL FOR CLEMENCY FOR THOSE CONVICTED IN RECENT TRIALS. AFTER ASKING TWO RHETORICAL QUESTIONS "HAS LE MONDE EVER ASKED WHETHER THESE MURDERERS HAVE RIGHT TO TAKE LIVES OF INNOCENT PEOPLE?...HAS LE MONDE EVER WRITTEN ONE WORD OF CONDEMNATION AGAINST TERRORISTS AND ASSASSINS SENT BY IRAQ TO EXTERMINATE PEOPLE?", SHAH SAID FOREIGN PRESS HAS NO RIGHT GIVE ADVICE ON MATTERS THEY KNOW NOTHING ABOUT. HE RECALLED IT IS HIS "CONSTITUTIONAL DUTY" NOT TO PERMIT "TERROR OR ATTEMPTS AGAINST MY COUNTRY'S SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY BY AGENTS OF OTHER COUNTRIES."

EXEMPT
HECK

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